



American Specialty Health Networks, Inc.



November 3, 2005

The Honorable Edward Gaffney  
Chairman, House Health Policy Committee  
Michigan House of Representatives  
S0585 House Office Building  
PO Box 30014  
Lansing, MI 48909-7514

RE: SB 351 - SUPPORT

Dear Chairman Gaffney:

American Specialty Health (ASH) would like to register support for SB 351 which creates the Michigan Board of Acupuncture and requires registration for acupuncturists. We support Michigan's efforts to move to uniform regulations for the profession and encourage the legislature to go a step further and establish licensure for acupuncture providers.

The establishment of this Board and its subsequent regulations will allow residents of Michigan the right to access qualified acupuncturists as citizens in 41 other states enjoy. Additionally, licensure of acupuncturists will ensure public safety and accountability to appropriately trained and examined applicants for licensure. Consumers deserve comparable regulatory standards and oversight mechanisms for all health care providers, including acupuncturists.

Operating in California and nationally from its corporate headquarters in San Diego, American Specialty Health is a full service specialty benefits company for complementary health care and lifestyle management. ASH administers benefit plan programs for chiropractic, acupuncture, massage therapy, naturopathy and nutrition services nationwide to health plans, insurance carriers, employer groups and trust funds. Outside California, ASH affiliates currently cover over 5 million members. It has been our experience that increasingly consumers are requesting access to appropriately trained and licensed complementary health care practitioners to minimize the use of medication and/or surgery to address their health care concerns. The establishment of the Michigan Board of Acupuncture will allow patients access to complementary health care practitioners who have been adequately trained and examined in the field of acupuncture.

If you have any questions, or would like further information, please contact our office at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Lloyd Friesen, DC  
Director, Professional & Governmental Affairs  
American Specialty Health

cc: Senator Beverly Hammerstrom, Michigan State Senate  
Dan Stump, Committee Clerk, Health Policy Committee